

securing a decent neutrality, or a semblance of slight partial assent, in other words a forbearance of hostility, to that divine law of faith and morals, which is set up over that society and all mankind, as the grand distinguisher between those who are in light and those who are in darkness, those who are approved and those who are condemned; and which has been sent on earth with a demand, not of this worthless non-aggression, but of cordial entire addiction and devoted zeal.

If there be any truth in the representations which make so large a part of this essay, Johnson's continual immersion in which is denominated polite literature, must have subjected him to the utmost action and pervasion of an influence of which the artichristian effect cannot be neutralized, without a more careful study than we have reason to believe he gave, or even had time to give, to the doctrine of religion as a distinct independent subject.

It must, however, be admitted that this illustrious author, who, though here mentioned only in the class of essayists, is to be ranked among the greatest moral philosophers, is less at variance with the essentials of the Christian economy, than the very great majority of either of these classes of authors. His speculations tend in a far less degree to beguile the approving and admiring reader into a spirit which feels repelled in estrangement and disgust on turning to the instructions of Christ and his apostles ; and he has more explicit and solemn references to the grand purpose of human life, to a future judgment, and to eternity, than almost any other of our elegant moralists has had the piety or the courage to make. There is so much that most powerfully coincides and co-operates with Christian truth, that the disciple of Christianity the more regrets to meet occasionally a sentiment, respecting, perhaps, the rule to judge by in the review of life, the consolations in death, the effect of repentance, or the terms of acceptance with God, which he cannot reconcile with the evangelical theory, nor with those principles of Christian faith in which Johnson avowed his belief. In such a writer he cannot but deem such deviations a matter of grave culpability.

Omission is his other fault. Though he did introduce in his serious speculations more distinct allusions to religious ideas, than most other moralists, yet he did not introduce